

DAMASCUS ROAD 2

**Paul Goodman - Upendranath Ashk - Max
Jacob - Prakash Jain - Patricia Adelson -
A R Ammons - Joyce Abbott Joseph - Phivos
Delphis - Ugo Rasolo - Attilio Bertolucci -
Julio Cortazar - Salvatore Quasimodo -
Jerome Rothenberg - Nelo Risi - Harak Lal G
Mathur - LeRoi Jones - Reuven Wasserman -
Philip Lomantia - Raimundo Salas Mercadal -
Clemente Rebora - Fielding Dawson - Max
Bense - Joel Oppenheimer - Odysseas Elytis -
Denise Levertov - Benedicto Lorenzo De
Blancas - Walter Lowenfels**





DAMASCUS ROAD

Edited by *Charles Shahoud Hanna*

Allentown, Pennsylvania

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CLEMENTE REBORA

UP HERE

Inside noon are trees and reefs
Vivid in the sun that burns its hour
On the summits: and you, air, limpidly
Receive its sonorous form.

The mountain is my whole house, and the blue
Sky gives an edge to desire;
Ineffably glad there beats, and I perceive,
The ecstasy of things.

Up here up here among the sounds of cattle bells
And the lingering song of a prone farmer boy,
Man's fate binds the hands
With strings that have no weight or furrows;

How miserably you pardon evil life,
What goodness it took to create us,
Up here up here there's no one you intone to
While one should want to purify his day.

*Translated by
Charles Guenther*

UGO FASOLO

I LIFT THE SHEET

I lift the sheet of paper stained
by cherries and model the petticoat
on the side, which swells alternately
in the quick pace, I, breath
of the May wind. Hair plays
with me on shoulders and untied about
the shining face, eyes laugh
at me for I scatter pollen in the sunlight;
I press the moving plain of wheat stalks,
I, everlasting youth,
I, breath of the May wind.

BEYOND THE SHADOW OF THE ARCH

To Ardengo Soffici

Beyond the arch of the years that bends
under the stones of birth and death,
beyond the shadow of the arch that gathers darkness
at evening, man leads
the seasons by the hand. Drouth
and snow, spring winds
and sad autumn splendors,
he looks around now and forever to run away
and to waver. Man stands among the olive trees,
his little hills of light, and where the wind
disturbs the tracks on distant roads,
his voice has the sound of manifold echoes
in the steadfast heart that informs space.

*Translated by
Charles Guenther*

ATTILIO BERTOLUCCI

FOR B . . .

The little paper airplanes that you make
Fly away in the twilight and are lost
Like nocturnal butterflies in the darkening
Air, never to return.

So are our days, but an abyss
Less gentle gathers them
Than this silent valley of dead
Leaves and autumnal waters

Where your fragile gliders
Lay down their tired wings.

*Translated by
Charles Guenther*

SALVATORE QUASIMODO

FROM THE WEB OF GOLD

From the web of gold repugnant spiders hang.

NELO RISI

SO LIFE GOES

How much is rotten
how much torn
how many holes in your mail
and not a patch.
It isn't repaired and isn't adjusted
a shirt isn't,
worn it's thrown away.
Or it's renewed.
As a coat
cut to measure
needs more proofs.

*Translated by
Charles Guenther*

A R AMMONS

DISCOVERER

If you must leave the shores of mind,
scramble down the walls
of dome-locked underwater caves
into the breathless, held

clarity of dark, where no waves break,
a grainy, colloidal grist
and quiet, carry a light: carry $A = \pi r^2$,
carry Kepler's equal areas in

equal times: as an air-line take Baudelaire's
L'Albatros: as depth markers
to call you back, fix the words of
the golden rule: feed the

night of your seeking with the clusters
of ancient light:
remember the sacred sheaf, the rods of
civilization, the holy

bundle of elements: if to cast light,
you must enter diffusion's ruin,
carry with you light to cast, to
gather darkness by: carry A is to B

as A plus B is to A: if to gather darkness
into light, evil into good,
you must leave the shores of brightened mind,
return with your discoveries and discover us.

WALTER LOWENFELS

PROSODY AND SUICIDE

Prosody: a continually changing accent on words between a changing poet and a changing audience. . . . This works out even for that warped kind of communication that expresses itself via suicide. Killing yourself is a last effort to talk to somebody — to get that shocked recognition, by language silenced, you haven't been able to get by other means.

The suicidal reference is not only to the act you never expect your friend to commit. There are other deaths . . . Poets who repeat all their life long their adolescent experiments and finally confront us with a child prodigy at the age of 70. (We used to say that Rimbaud's greatest creative effort was when he quit writing).

My campaign against nostalgia has its base in language. I. E., — to use the language of today for today's emotions: the clean, new scientific word, woven into the fabric of the poem so the reader is alive with today's electronics — not Ben Franklin's kite key.

All our talk about death is itself an old-fashioned allusion — as if it were a phase of experience. Many of our elegies (my own included) strike me as hangovers of the rain dancers and witch doctors who solved mysteries by watching which way a leaf fell from a tree.

What we are in danger of is not the death we can't experience, but the death we do experience as we go numb to our age. Heisenberg expressed it in his theory of indeterminacy: if you don't know where you are going, how do you know where you are?

The half-greatness of Selby and some of our other young friends sums up the tragedy of the U.S.A. — that we could swing into cosmic space and explore microcosmic atoms, and still hang on to an 19th-century social catastrophe with all its nightmares half-exposed by the best writings of our alienates.

Of course we produce genius, but genius isn't enough in the 1960's. You have to be able to tell time. Corso's most violent virtues are a counterpart of the French generals exploding an atom bomb in the midst of Africa and thinking the Hundred Families of France are more modern than the 250 million people of Africa who are throwing off their old ways. I don't want to write or listen to the elegies of a country that might have been. That is the essence of nostalgia. I want the prosody of tomorrow for the country of tomorrow as it lives the poem today . . .

We need modern prosody to express contemporary emotions — and very few of us experience them in the U.S.A. Many of us are going through a surface epoch of alienation,

distrust, disengagement, suicide — while tomorrow lives in the resistance movement.

In the 1960's, time itself is on a count-down schedule. We are covering generations of human effort in a tremendous leap forward toward a new kind of life. An endless necklace of cousins waits us across the precession of equinoxes, and by our prosody we shall know them now.

NO MORE POEMS
(For Aaron Kurtz)

If I have a campaign against nostalgia, it's because I can't seem to get away from my 1930 slogan

: NO MORE POEMS.

Why do we discuss anything beside these really important problems? It is out of the impossibility of writing poems in our time that I have written some.

Imagine — we have to write poems that can be read while the reader is revolving around the earth at 25,000 miles per second. We are writing the last subhuman songs. Tomorrow the real angel sings. And not in English or Yiddish. I have no pity for your pseudo-sadness at your disappearing language. You are simply experiencing everybody's tomorrow today.

You said about certain editors that the reason they don't understand modern poetry is because they don't understand modern life. That strikes me as one of those brilliant oversimplifications. Suppose every artist gets certain aspects of reality into his work. Does any artist get it all? The final artist in your sense would have to be a circle whose "center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere."

I have to reject the idea of the identity of art and reality. There are aspects of modern life that can be known only on the picket line or battlefield or jail — or in bed or at work or in the sports arena. Are you trying to say only the artist is equipped to describe reality? Would you wipe out modern science and the mathematics of the macrocosm?

Walter Lowenfels

So, let's be a little less extreme. Let's say there are layers of modern reality that cannot be understood by those who reject Picasso or Bartok or Charles Ives — or Bill Handy or William Carlos Williams or Mayakovsky or Eluard. And yet, modern reality will be constructed mainly by several billion people who don't know these artists.

I don't think our job is to solve this problem. Sometimes it is only necessary to state the problem as accurately as possible. For in formulating the impossible, we already get closer to it.

What I want to reject in your statement is any presumption that the opposite of it is true — that if you understand modern poetry, you understand modern reality. The curious fact here is that some of us artists are very close to the reality of the 5th century BC in Greece; some of us get as late as the 19th century Impressionists or the romantic composers. Some live esthetically in the world of Beethoven or Goya.

Ah, you say, but the great artist touches through his grasp of modern reality the universal. If that is what you are saying, then your accusation is much more grave. For you are then accusing those people who don't understand modern poetry of lacking the universal strain that binds all people together throughout all time. Are you saying this? Are you suggesting they live in a never-never fog betwixt and between? The Half-Dead that Dante spoke about? If you are saying that, then most of us are never wholly alive. If that is your thesis, what becomes of the humanist thesis that God is the people?

Can't you see you are on the edge of anarchy? That you are approaching Schopenhauer! What you get is that life is for the few who appreciate the finer things.

Maybe it's better not to speak of these things at all . . . or to leave the rest to the philosophers who can keep this up forever. All we might arrive at anyway is one more poem.

Yet what fun is there if we cannot add to the confusion? I refer of course to the larger confusion. All the artist does is to isolate and define one microwave of it.

In the trial balance of literary reviews, we might have met as strangers in separate pages of anthologies. Or, in the encounters of our common age, we might have run into each other as echoes of birth certificates, copyrights or other human incidents in our country's traffic jam.

Not these or any other statistics account for our joy at reaching the same dinner table with the same joy in translating the rigor mortis of our different tongues into singing syllables.

A good poem, Tu Fu said, lasts a thousand years. Should we quibble over a few centuries? Is dinner the time to discuss kitchen middens — where my old-world English will be as gone as your old-world Yiddish?

Let's celebrate tonight without nostalgia for the buried schmoos of Second Avenue Borodinos and toast in Kentucky bonded bourbon "Lechayim! Long Life!" — not among the beetles but among the bottles of delicious four-star tomorrows full of shining languages and poems to come!

ODYSSEAS ELYTIS

MARINA OF THE CLIFFS

You have the taste of tempest on your lips . . . Where were you
wandering

all day in the cruel reverie of stone and sea?

An eagle-soaring wind stripped the hills,

stripped your desire to the bone,

and the kernels of your eyes took the chimera's rod,

chilling memory with foam.

Where is the familiar ascent of young September

to the red earth where you played looking down

on the deep blue flowers of the other girls,

on the corners where your playmates left southernwood by the
armful?

Where were you wandering

all night in the cruel reverie of stone and sea?

I used to tell you to count bright days in naked water,

lolling to rejoice in the dawn of reality,

or again to roam the yellow fields

with a three-leaved light in your breast, heroine of iambus.

You have the taste of tempest on your lips
and a dress red as blood
deep in the gold of summer
and the hyacinth aroma . . . Where were you wandering
descending to the sea-shores, the pebbled bays?
A cold bitter seaweed was there,
but deeper what you knew was bleeding,
and you opened your arms with amazement speaking its name,
climbing lightly to the lucidity of the depths
where your star-fish constellation was shining.

Listen: reason is a later wisdom
and time the violent sculptor of man,
the sun stands above the beast of hope,
and you nearer to it clutch a love,
having the bitter taste of tempest on your lips.

It is not for you, blue to the bone, to plan another summer
for rivers to change their courses
to return you to their mother,
for you to kiss more cherry trees,
or ride the northwest wind.

Propped on the cliffs, without yesterday and tomorrow,
on the perils of the cliffs with a hurricane in your hair,
you shall take leave of your enigma.

*Translated by
George Economov*

JOEL OPPENHEIMER

NATURE BOY

i said i never
looked at trees like
unless you know
there might be a
lady, her weight
depends on my arm

the

the

the tree stands bare.
in winter, against the
winter sky, the tree
stands bare, certainly.

now there are green
leaves. now there are
caterpillars to play
at its feet. now there
are ants to crawl upon us.
i said, i never looked
at trees, damn it, unless
there might be the weight
of a woman upon it.

TERROR CODDER

burnt umber the color used
in the sicilian mtns, yellow
ochre the color of the
juden star the solomon seal
we worked magic with.

the flower the
color of burnt clay, sun-
darkened, or maybe a nipple.
arrange them in a vase.
egromancy sd burton the
answer to all ills, are you
a slave of the lamp? baby, it/s
dark down there. i was
afraid and did not want to return.
but it is possible to walk across
the ice mtns, or the desert
sands. hot sand to burn yr
soles a hard leather brown.
if you make it. otherwise
shrivel. shrive yrself somehow,
it is required by the law.

burnt umber, then, the color
used in the sicilian mtns;
the sardinian woman wear
striped skirts, the colors
depending on the particular
locality.

the men
wear tight vests.

A FIVE ACT PLAY

one more kind act the
world i've constructed
won't exist. one more
kind act i'm liable to
be able to move.

one
more kind act i might
straighten out, stop
scratching my toes, yes,
one more kind act baby
i could cry and laugh i
mean really all those
lovely things a man is
made of.

one more kind
act i will i mean i
really will, baby.

LEROI JONES

POLITICAL POEM

Luxury, then, is a way of
being ignorant, comfortably
An approach to the open market
of least information. Where theories
can thrive, under heavy tarpaulins
without being cracked by ideas.

(I have not seen the earth for years
and think now possibly "dirt" is
negative, positive, but clearly
social. I cannot plant a seed, cannot
recognize the root with clearer dent
than indifference. Though I eat
and shit as a natural man. (Getting up
from the desk to secure a turkey sandwich
and answer the phone, the poem undone
undone by my station, by my station,
and the bad words of Newark.) Raised up
to the breech, we seek to fill for this
crumbling century. The darkness of love,
in whose sweating memory all error is forced.

Undone by the logic of any specific death. (Old gentlemen
who still follow fires, tho are quieter
and less punctual. It is a polite truth
we are left with. Who are you? What are you
saying? Something to be dealt with, as easily.
The noxious game of reason, saying, "No, No,
you cannot feel", like my dead lecturer
lamenting thru gipsies his fast suicide.

RAIMUNDO SALAS MERCADAL

THIS DEAD MAN

This man is dead.

It does not matter that he still breathes, that he walks the streets.
It does not matter that his voice vibrates antennae,
that he comments on the latest news or that he gives speeches
about the living.

This man is dead.

This man died before he was born.
This man has no salvation, nor seeks it.

If he rises one day it will be to die.

On the cross, in fire,
singing or cursing,
near the wall of always, in the beloved arms,
or up there, seeking the roundness of the world,
he will die, again,
he will die.

he will die as many times as some child is born.

(Because it happens sometimes, don't ask me how:
someone separates himself from the issue,

someone hurries

his glass of darkness, someone, that one
or the other farther away, breaks his daily
jar of lilacs, his small unforgettable violin,
and goes through the cutting edge of an open razor,
so,
simply like the flight of a bird,
and he goes through the depths, through the dark hall,
while the fiesta goes on, the same, for centuries,
between slow words and interminable songs.

No, it does not matter that he still shouts,
nor that he passes through streets overflowing with sun,
nor that the afternoon illuminates his eyes,
nor at midnight searches for God through the dark paradise of
touch.

He is dead, he is dead.

Don't ask him to speak to you.
Don't count his heartbeats.
Don't put a mirror to his lips.

This man is dead.

This man has been dead for many centuries.

*Translated by
Daisy Aldan and
Miriam Davis*

BENEDICTO LORENZO de BLANCAS

THE WELL

Once more I open my eyes.
And there is total darkness. Only the owls
watch me intensely or they flutter round about.
And all is silent. No one.
Nothing speaks to my soul
nor to my heart.

Darkness is total. Only big-bellied toads can be heard
croaking in the swamps;
only a furtive, slimy friction of reptiles;
only the pulsating breath of beasts
in their hot sweat of lust.
... All ... a violent river of passions
shattering the image of beauty.
... And the nothing invades my bones
and floods my eyes,
blotting out the erstwhile ray of hope.

Darkness. Only the owls cackling in the shadows:
— This one's an atheist ... that one misses Mass ...
— This Catholic is a Jew ...

• •

hundred

hundred
..

ety!)

t me

sky

guish?

from above?

this swampy
 mine

mire.

JEROME ROTHENBERG

TWO MOORISH POEMS

THE STORM

after Ben Suhayd, Cordoba, 992-1034

One by one
the flowers
open their lips)
a dark night
looking for her
breasts, the rain
that feeds us
whose black clouds
are armies
dark with water
Processions
striking golden
swords
A field of lightnings

Jerome Rothenberg

THE RED TUNIC

after Ben al-Sabuni, Seville, 13th c.

Her white face
comes out of nowhere
towards me
And her dress
the color of a rose
Overhead
the moon is lost
in darkness, how
to speak of it?
a knife that opens up
my blood, her eyes or
what? I watch her wipe the
dirty blade
over her dress

PAIN

Everywhere
I come on small lines
A maze, again
a maze of lines
And pebbles
There are pebbles
where you walk
but not the ocean
No!
Never the ocean

He watched the bathers
he became the sea

*

No!
the wind, a
cap
blows in the street
My father chases
it, I stumble
where he runs:
the other ocean
No!

*

The sun god, lifeless
and the coins
fallen from your pockets
where you fell:
who hasn't struggled
waking
can't know
death's other side,
your face

*

Speech hurts me, hurts me
but —
the clear joy of having spoken!

GRIGNAN

WRITE

like a machine writes when it writes, in smooth phases but liable to loss disturbances and accidents, sand

Grignan .i.

texts and walls out of walls by walls out of walls by walls out of walls

Grignan .ii.

text on the wall, ancient, this has to do with existence, immediately and irretrievably, hope and caution already in the grass tips above the grey stone slab in Grignan, Les Guides Bleus 1956 p.453, beneath this slab all lovers' meetings vanish like words disappear under your tongue, gone the hand's motion across paper, the aperçu sits muted on those lines, is continued in others, Madame, Madame or daughter, every destruction is in vain, even autumn is not the death of spring when the world is as full as a state of things in Wittgenstein or the language as empty as his tautological chains, deformation has taken place, Beckett already told Proust that, will we live or a white Citroën passes like the sheen on olives too soon only a beginning of through her ivy hidden no no in the Garrigue skillfully sent two fell come through see treason once that

Max Bense

Grignan .iii.

I spread my legs and show him to you, unhidden and prepared, the hot townsquare is empty at noon, shadows are rare and precise, life's wonderful moments erect happiness, tower with the small and exquisite dome, even the huge rock on top of that hill is only a sign of this exhibitionism of everything, steep and firm, the lavender fields' big grey hedgehogs are full of selfenjoyment and the earth has its *taint* — a note for Madame

Grignan .iv.

nouns, three times a day the bus, empty squares, it pays to detour, visiting the Madame, Marie de Rabutin Marquise de Sevigne, 18th April 1696 last day, Grignan day, grey as Grignan walls and walls out of walls of walls, towers and gates of the Tricastin, Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, Chamaret and the Death of Taulignan, a Beckett landscape his semantic maquis, two steps forward and three steps back, impenetrability of the word, escape into intermediaries, dissolution of objects through sentences, if objects are still dragged along, only the peripheral is still a thing, crumb and ingrowth of meaning, nobody home, decay into prettiness and elongation, into a rococo of erosion into Eugene de Kermadec's wilderness, brick and flint, pillars and poverty, automobile graveyard and leafy arbor path, houses and houses out of houses, 15th 17th 19th century, cypress rows and then neglect, truffle oaks and lavender bushes, a waiting for something to come to pass, always a dog's stare, a cat's fur, a magpie's flight, Salles sous Bois and Dieulefit, no, God did not create them, hardly a Sunday any more, lots of blue, the blue smocks, the snowy pate of Mont Ventoux, sometimes even in May, memory is silence, even that of the monks in Aiguebelle, memory is writing, even that of the Marquis in her castle, *c'est le hasard qui conduit nos plumes*, that is her, not Proust, *ce qui est bon est bon*; *ce qui est vrai, est vrai*, that's her, not Gertrude Stein, the ants fabres from Serignan speed across the paper and in the distance Nougat de Montelimar or Chateaufort-du-Pape, the whole world's own Marquise, rue Sevigne, Hotel Sevigne, Patisserie Sevigne, Bar and Restaurant Raymond Azar Grignan Telephone 7, trout served on Sundays only, Petrarca is gone, Ponge, Tortel and Jaccottet, no hay, no prosperity, no expropriation, few nouns altogether on the the tortoises' backs

Grignan .vii.

SOUPER: black mushrooms beneath the soil on the pignout and fertile in the ovum served at night in Grignan

Grignan .viii.

there is no return without destruction no retreat any more the shadow crushes the image it does not suffocate MOTIONS WHICH ARE ARRESTED TOO SOON DO NOT GIVE THE HAND A CHANCE TO ASSESS THE MEMBERS' BEAUTY OR LACK OF IT AND THE MINUTE CHANGES THAT TAKE PLACE WHEN A THOUGHT ON THIS BLOCKS THE WAY OF DESIRE DO NOT SUFFICE FOR THE EXPANDING GAZE THAT TEARS UP THE SENTENCE red round and hard head turned away on slender neck and like a wave the light shawl noone will arise from the bench at noon time to stay no encounter no face behind the pane no hour on the outskirts of town no bodies liquefied in the sea no night in a hotelroom no delight for the fingers no closed eye no open mouth no pointed nose no smooth and round shoulder no wild barbaric word no beautiful heel seen from soundless minimized life TO BE ABLE TO STAY NEXT TIME TO BE ABLE TO STAY AND STAY NEXT TIME ONCE JUST ONCE JUST THIS ONCE WAS IT ONCE UPON A TIME AND ONCE AND FOR ALL the hand shredding away belated vineleaves from the hair does not prevent dust from seeping through the cracks and the mirrors confounded go by and white and a hard leaf white and by in March, an old woman walking slowly, the post office is closed, no rats by the water, and the hen lies dead in the street, ALL SENTENCES ABOUT GRIGNAN CONNECT AND THE DELIGHT THEY ENCASE DEPENDS UPON THE CONCEIVABILITY OF A CERTAIN STIMULUS DRAGGED THROUGH MEMORY pressed plants pasted in backwards downstream the grey river

*Translated by
Anselm Hollo*

PHIVOS DELPHIS

BIRDS AND PEASANTS

Every day, the bird of solitude sings here
for me, in pinetree measures . . .
Daily company above, and beauty,
here, in pleasant countryside.

Evening brings the butterfly of night; at dark,
this — hovering — rings my lamplight.
Once this cheerful legate settles on my
table, I am not alone.

Through each noon, I sleep out in the open air
beneath the sky. Wild thistles
rustle like acquaintances of mine . . . with
treading thrombs to break the still

afternoons. Above me, branches of the trees
sway purlingly, as rocking
me, embracing me; and life's a happy
graceful song of endless dream.

Here, I drive from me the shadowed thought of work,
my heavy yoke . . . forget our
Devil. For, today I sing joy's minstrelsy, and
know tomorrow's day will dawn.

Every evening, near to sunset, passes here
an elder peasant friend, whose
name is Mitsos Milonas; our eyes then
greet the passage of this man.

He's unflagging; yet, though robust, firm of stride,
he's somewhat bent by eighty
years. But not depressed or stiff — full-joyed, to
say: "These days! — our golden age."

Sphere of his life's work has been the field; and hard
his hands with steel have labored . . .
always, eyes inquiring of the well-worked
soil . . . and well, he's used his tools.

"Brainless," once we spoke of this old man; but he's
of unalloyed and dauntless
mind, with optimistic step of purest
youth, and unconstrained of heart.

Crudeness, artlessness — I love this opposite
of hypocrites in cities,
wicked men. He's stern, abrupt, like virgin
earth . . . in strait and useful life.

Meekly; still, he's like a bird of prey. He works
upon his fours; and bearlike
on the sod, from which he seldom raises
up his body — stooped, most times.

One whose hands have penetrated all; and one
insatiable who struggles
toward his death, time's plow-marks leaving traces
obdurate, deeply in his face.

Mitsos Milonas, my old new friend — one strong
and yet not youthful now . . . one
cheerful, though his fate holds hard interminable
trials, unmitigated strife.

Phivos Delphis

From this man, my ritual, each morning when
I rise up in my tent and
so command myself: "Early be in bed, and
early rise . . ." 'tis wholesomeness.

After bathing and gymnastics — breathing stern
eurhythmic exercises . . .
every morning, on return to farming,
he then asks me: did I too?

Twinlike to an old one living in my town,
not harboring a death-thought,
though he lie awake all night, and sleepless,
watching for a dawn to come.

Through all days, oblivious of wrongs endured —
each day, as first commencing
work; and each forgotten yesterday, as
gone, — when he was racked and felled.

During every present hour passing here,
my bird of solitude is
my companion, chastely-sentient convoy . . .
all about lies strange turmoil.

Just two hours, that old one sleeps the vigiled night —
remaining times, he's up and
pacing all about that place — this outworn
soul, whose rest will be his tomb.

There, his beaten mind will rest in quietude,
his hopes no longer ache; and
here will be his room no more . . . his eyes and
ears then closed to tumult's ways.

Humble too, alive in strife, another man
like him who passes by us,
called John Tonkas, from near Mousonitsa:
sunburnt fugitive like me,

torn, uprooted from the world . . . and I salute
repeatedly, Bardoucian
shepherds who, in storm of civil war, were
thrown afar along with me.

Far from homeland spruce, their Alpine beauty like
symphonious flocks . . . our country's
native birthplace, Attic homeland where our
everlasting dreams are made.

All nostalgic longing's potencies remain,
enduring ever on this
hostile and ungenerous soil, unfeeling
ground for this so-exiled one.

It's extremely difficult to take new root
in stranger-clay; no path for
mountaineer. As wounded eagles, he and I;
borne by me, Parnassus gained.

As a shepherd holds his crook, to tend his flock,
the plowman holds the steelshare . . .
eagle fixes course in air . . . and I thus
pass with plow of thought, my course,
which moves both free and not-free
over all extension . . . shepherd crook or share.
I so enjoin.

*Translated by
James Boyer May*

REUVEN WASSERMAN

THE BUS TO KINNERET

In Israel the song of songs sings in a youngblood poet who wildly imagines he's Solomon-lover a scategorical doll-pleaser sweet quince of the earth green and rainy with endearing young tongue body like maple colored syrup myrrhful of total eclipse of virgin daydreams planning to dry-heave his heart-puppy on the annual bus trip to Kinneret quietly agonizingly to the hush crush of his nowadays pulphood almost manhood secretly bursting for Haggar. He'll find her lonely frightened by his armful hotlips concerning her mother's leavened timidity deep in the middle of snickering eyes in a jealous rearful busload of chanting juniors he'd point for her the holes in his body where penetrate

raindrop handy solo desires soulful rivers surging at the glance of her and she'd suddenly appear in the strange classroom corner where a boy-wall girl-wall cementship form an angle for delirious teen-age speculation igniting the poet's loins with an ancient fire to bake an angel cake for an Unknow Swedish princess blondian arch-typical who'd warm her cold ancestral whiteness in his arms exactly as her namesake Abraham's thorn-in-the-kibbutz. Under the world sparks would appear someday in her eyes ignited thinking of the annual bustrip to Burning Kinneret where the hellish horrible dreamy eternal seats of longing would be crazy beauty around his neck a sweet maddening pillow-pounding hot-eyed dry-tied slipping away of desert sandy moon-dune avoidance for she'd blush between the unknown and the poet's silent-spoken mental aggression. He'd be a beggar on the bus arousing her pity breathe in her soulsmell maybe lay his torrid brain on the dime of her lap changing in the privacy of his literate silence into a King of Kings who'll annually pick for the first lady of his Heartland Haggar the Swedish desert bloom ocean of rippable pluckable Far intentions. She'd know All in his joyride excursion to ancient Aqua Bella tower near Jerusalem the around so thick-armed buckets to place elliptical winking olives in so to sit on a moss-covered throne smiling subterranean olive-eyes at Haggar the Please attainable. Heaven violet mounts with laughter fights the angry waves at the Kinneret shoreline where no sand protects the tender feet which skip the lovely stones of sin sticking wart-forbidden navel-like on the belly-beach hot for lover flesh. It would've been lovely but Haggar never made the bus scene forging leadness in the poet's pressured palate silly student faces wondering at the dry-cry in his eye the bus shaking its nervous way to an old sterile tower near the dirt-lined shore of Kinneret.

*Translated by
Hirshel Silverman*

PHILIP LAMANTIA

CEYLONESE TEA CANDOR

for J. R., le Comte A. R. de Sales, and Helène

I'm the greatest poet this time because I was pushed off the
Pyramid of the Sun
by Molock's Giant Black Crest Golden Lite
it was frightening alright —
I was fascinated I turned Aymon's head to watch it opening
slitted Door from the Second Ledge
taking 60 percent of our vision, optics, you could see it!!!
burning across the Black Sky, 7 PM, March, ! O IDES!, 1961
It had a psychic effect reducing us to animal pulp
I was smashed my brain sent hurtling against the Edge Aymon
screaming come back to count the steps to the Top
A Mongoloid priest with a Cloak something started to hiss under
our feet on the One Hundredth Step thinking i find the
secret meaning of all those 200 stone L's! — elbows —
he began to run ahead of me at first I only thought it
was a cricket later knowing only Armadillos have
been sighted on the Pira Mi Di I didn't see the
mongolian figure but after getting lost unable
to find the steps down a million stars blacked
out by Mantle Night Aymon on the Third Ledge

perhaps 300 feet across
and twenty wide drifted away to the far edge
where hung skulls of victims,
BABIES INCLUDED 5 centuries before
JUST BELOW he was putting his foot
legs over the edge, about to go over
onto a hundred arrowsharp rock juttings
When I cried AYMOM COME BACK! COME BACK!!!
from what I don't know I got the strength to dash forward
grabbed him by the hand away from the edge
hoping we'd find the stone stairway
and there were few stars to illuminate us down
and then, I looked back from the Third Ledge back
that is, to the Top of the pyramid, I saw THE SLIT

OF THE GREAT DOOR OF MALEVOLENT
LIGHT OPEN FIRE ON US I SAID LOOK
AYMON LOOK!!! He swung his head for a few
seconds half way around and screamed again LETS GET
OUT OF HERE!!! I'VE HAD IT!!! we raced down
and the Black Shapes hundreds of them cut around us and
wailed a weird banshee sound of hell I couldn't quite believe it
but it WAS TRUE!!! we were being pushed off the
Pyramid of the Sun that IS the mountain of Hell itself
and now I say unto you

O fools of wisdom

O poets of love and death

believe my brothers in unbelief I AM SEER OF
MOLOCH'S HAVEN

THESE SIX CENTURIES CONTINUES TO
OPERATE 150 miles

north of
Mexico City
once called Ten
och tit lan built one
thousand AD by the Toltecs
after destruction of Teotihuacan
city of the gods . and conquered by
witch/driven Aztecs, bloody blackmagic
nazi/moloch worshipping sun devils of old
mexico who took the remains of Toltec High
Religion and turned it into degenerate center of Hell's
cult of bloody hearts torn open for the pleasure of all the
demons of the seven circles of the seven thousand webs of the
seven million fallen angels of God's solar paradise
And I say to you all take care on this continent that the
Hordes shall not descend who have been prepared by
Fiends who for 6 centuries officiate their rites of
rapine child sacrifices and blackmagic murders from
these heights of stone
BEWARE AND LISTEN TO MY MESS-
AGE OH POORE MANKINDE ON
THIS CONTINENT OF THE PEO-
PLE OF THE HOLY PERSON LIS-
TEN AND PREPARE AND
CHANGE!!! CHANGE!!!

Philip Lamantia

make Holy Changes in yr lives
that we exercize
once for all Moloch and his human pawns from Asia's vast
colonnades of ice down
thru Alaska toward your shores, Manahata
all your Israel's dreams brought down in the
harsh swords of their Hordes of Hell for I know
from what I speak

Change into the sun
look into God's face which is everywhere
my war is holy my war is peace my war is Spirit over flesh
my war is the final way in the infinite stalking of your turnabout
rejection of your deepest truth

now listen if you do not learn now to see Christ in all others
if you do not take up your swords of the mind against the
mechanical materialist VOID
if you do not pray for DIVINE ENLIGHTMENT
if you do not experience God OH POORE MANKINDE!!!
ON THIS PLANET YOUR TIME WILL BE UP!!!
AND there SHALL BE HELL TO PAY!!!

FIELDING DAWSON

WEBSTER CHICAGO

His shoulders hunched forward, his stomach was concave and his legs were short; shaggy hair hung over his pale forehead.

Now he was drunk, standing in his divided world with his body tensed. His cloudy brown eyes were hard and shiny, he argued with the imagined critic, he opened his lid, filled himself with bright red resentment, sealed himself and began to ferment into his Only Me: a land of hug me kiss me alone on the sunken stranded oily sumps of The Way I Like It, jealousy, fear, guilt, doubt and resentment swirled behind his eyes and he cowered in created winds.

"I have within the head a room of death . . ."

Stuart Perkoff

His wife asked,

"How do you feel, honey?" The next day.

He shook his head and avoided her eyes. His own were red and frightened. "What did I do?"

"Nothing. Would you like some coffee?"

"Black."

She went in the kitchen.

He sat in the chair and looked out the window. The sun was painful. His eyes teared. He wiped them and stared at the floor. He was limited. He was bitter and resentful and frightened. "Would you play something?" he asked, looking at the record player.

She poured coffee.

Soft dance music wafted into the flat. He sat back and stretched his legs; he bent forward and something jabbed inside his chest, it went away and he sat back again. She looked at him. He was justified.

"What's the matter?"

"Nothing." He sipped the hot black coffee, put it down and left the flat. Cold beer was to the point.

A few days went by.

Fielding Dawson

She heard him crash against the wall, stumbling and muttering on his way up the stairs. He opened the door and glared at her. He sat on the couch and took out an unopened pint of rye, put his fingers around it, opened and tilted it up drinking. He lowered it and looked at her.

"Happy?"

She didn't answer. He asked, "Cat got your little tongue?"

She told him to lower his voice.

He laughed, stood up and looked at the kitchen clock and left.

He came home late. He hunched forward in the doorway, breathing fast, hands clenched into fists, he began to pound the wall. She woke up on the unfolded couch and yelled at him.

He pushed her around. Later he collapsed. She undressed him and dragged him to the couch and got him under the covers. Slack and white and quiet. Unconscious blood and meat.

A couple of days later he said, "We never have anybody over."

She nodded. He asked, "Do you think I should call Charlie?"

"O.K." she said. He called Charlie, he hung up, sat down and drank coffee and looked at the floor. She asked,

"What did he say?"

"Charlie can't come over."

"Why?"

"He says he wants to get to bed early; get up and take his kids out tomorrow."

"Oh."

He refilled his cup, added cream and spoons of sugar to bring the beige colored coffee over the rim; he stirred it and drank, he dragged from the cigarette and put it out. She asked,

"Do you want to go to a movie?"

"What's playing."

"I don't know. Do we have a paper?"

"No. Fuck it."

"Why don't you ask Joey over?"

He looked at the record player. Webster Chicago. He had had it for years. He shook his head.

She began to clear the table, she said, "I'll call up the RKO and find out what's on. If it's any good, we'll go. O.K.?"

He nodded, looking at her with a blurred expression.

JULIO CORTAZAR

HIS LOVER

You are she who is welcome,
the first stone of happiness, the
in-gathered dance of the statue
which birds hear and scatter.

When, from her florid thigh
jaws grew slack
on the first midday of earth, to
name you is the taste of pomegranate.

Your heart invents
the colors on maps
Sunday's orbs swing
like a hammock in your eyes, easy, and
when you are in me, night
opens its breast,
stars bleed drops
to your hair, your name, your violence.

This infinite
dryness, drink, he
drained, tank of joy
prodigality of the cry the
lips choke back in delirium

Who invented the future,
its salt machine, its empty rose.
The skin of my eyelids keeps the world
apart from me, but you are on this skin,
and behind it, further in,
you live.

*Translated by
Paul Blackburn*

RUE MONTMARTRE

RAIN, enemy of snails and prostitutes,
that empty hand suspended in doorways,
with unerring spats blinds,
one by one, the air's smiles,
slides its circular spiders onto the hair.

What
was that time when we wanted it to pour, when
the old man was snoring, when
bed, head, and didn't wake up 'til morning, when
the clouds lifted?

Because, now,
like rancid spaghetti dangling from umbrellas, this
does protest the mass production of
the adjective of approbrium, sheds
liters of gum, the gums dissolving does con-
taminant space with noiseless pyorrheas.
The cloudburst, freezing porcupine, bawls
its instantaneous
up-to-the-minute news

What was a cloud
rets, stirring itself, slides its
last driveling snails onto hosted collars, shoes.
Here is the blue cemetery, the area
of demarcation;
we cross it like moles scuttling through corridors
that seal themselves off across our passage, which
lick at us hunting the quick juice, to grasp
at what remains of the day
in our faces.

*Translated by
Paul Blackburn*

NECTURNE

I have black hands tonight, my heart sweating
like after a fight with the centipedes of smoke until
oblivion. Everything
has said there, the bottles the boat, I don't
know if they loved me, whether they expected to see me.
Newspaper thrown on the bed tells of diplomatic encounters, an
exploratory venesection, he beat him buoyantly in four sets.
The tallest wood
encircles this house in the center of the city, I know, I
feel that a blind man is dying somewhere near here. My
wife goes up and down a small staircase like
the captain of a ship who distrusts stars.
There's a cup of hot milk, papers, it's eleven at night.
Outside it seems as though herds of horses will gather
before the window I have at my back.

THE FLY

I'll have to kill you again,
I've killed you so many times, in
Casablanca, in Lima
in Christiania,
in Montparnasse,
on a ranch in the Lobos district,
in a whorehouse, in the kitchen
on top of a comb, in the
office, on this pillow I'll
have to kill you again,
I with my single life.

*Translated by
Paul Blackburn*

JOYCE ABBOTT JOSEPH

ON THE DEVASTATION OF SPRINGTIME 1963

Not having to reckon with
nuclear nightmare, altered
air currents nor clouds
of spray for small creatures,

the heart once celebrated
life's renewal
in unrecapturable innocence.

Yet Spring comes,
despite those who believe
that bombs are better
than blossoms . . .

comes groping
with flower hands,
her green willow veil
tinged with frost, filigreed
with dead birds.

Where is the wisdom
requisite for restoring
the primal glory of Spring?

We are dazzled with new knowledge
and stunned with our stupidity,
it being only yesterday
since we left the Garden.

PATRICIA ADELSON

December 24, 1964

Dear Mary,
Merry Christmas & Happy
New Year!! I hope you have
a wonderful, happy, healthy
new year. Can you guess what the
prize ~~was~~ the flowers,
in back of the girl ~~you~~ remind
me of!! (maybe). No, not
that!! (you) Oh! Well! you will never
guess; you ~~you~~!! Not that I need
to be reminded, because you;
was all that I could think of all
the way home, and to the present
time when I write you this very
tiny token of my extreme thanks.
Thank you so much for the
beautiful, gorgeous, wonderful,
warm, soft, ~~unforgettable~~
blue sock, in the ornate wrapping.
(I think I will save it forever)
~~because~~ I am sure that I did not
lose it.

P.S. Best wishes for
I hope to see a very jolly & grand
you soon again! Christmas,
over. Patricia Adelson

P.R.S. *it is just what I needed!*
 No! Your wrong! I am not writing
 this because it is what you should
 say, it is true. AN INVESTIGATION
 PROOF (An early morning

mommy - Patsy! You will miss the bus!
 the pers are all lined up!
 what is keeping you!

Patsy - I cannot find any socks (blue)

mommy - I hope they are knee socks

Patsy - my purple ones.

mommy - They are in the wash, you have
 worn them yesterday

Patsy - (Sigh of Dispair)
 mommy - can't you wear socks the same
 color, as your shirt. (it is blue
 the same color as are in my new! socks,

Patsy - I donot ^{From an original design by Patricia Adelson} (Lrr-rr-bus leaves ^{for} designs.)
 have any.

mommy - Well, you can not wear knee
 socks, you know you have a
 cold.

Investigation complete.

later - Patricia Adelson
 steps into home. (P.R.S.)

5 seconds . . .

Late Bell = Buzz



URGENCY

I went in a little scared: an ostrich was losing his feathers; a bronze bird stood on a white stucco pedestal. Some graven cocks decorated his plumage. The door to the hall opened; M. Abel Hermant, or a man very much like M. Abel Hermant, appeared. "Ah young man," he said, "you're here to claim the hundred francs?" I found out only later that everybody who came there got a hundred francs. When the money was mentioned the ostrich dropped a feather and the bronze bird flew away. Aside from all these goings-on the hall was a dusty wilderness; the curator collected needles in iron boxes on which the heads of great men were painted, Cuvier, Buffon and so on. "Ah, young man," repeated M. Abel Hermant or a man very much like M. Abel Hermant, "You're here for the hundred francs!"

And the birds started to move again. "No sir, it's free! It's a free gift!" My future confessor had to hear no more. "Free gift" was enough for him and he turned his back to me. The ostrich put on his policeman's hat and looked at me with disquieted curiosity. The bronze bird was bronzer than ever.

*Translated by
Armand Schwerner*

SPANISH GENEROSITY

Through the good offices of a Spanish friend of mine, the King of Spain sent me a shirt with three big diamond buttons, a toreador vest with a lace collar, a wallet with little moralities on the Conduct of Life. Cars, boulevards, visits to friends' houses: will the maid sleep with me? M.S.L. was nice to G.A.; he rejected her for no good reason. I made up with the Y's . . . Now at the National Library I see I'm being watched. Every time I try to read certain books four employees armed with a child's sword come toward me. Finally a young clerk comes over. He says to me, "Over here," and he shows me, behind the books, a hidden well; he points out a road of planks that looks like an instrument of torture: "You read books on the Inquisition. You're condemned to death!" and I saw that someone had embroidered a death's-head on my sleeve.

"How much?"

"How much can you give?"

"Fifteen francs."

"Too much," the clerk says.

"I'll give them to you on Monday."

The generosity of the Spanish King had drawn the attention of the Inquisition.

*Translated by
Armand Schwerner*

PAUL GOODMAN

SIBLINGS

Of us three who fifty years and more
have worked too hard, Alice has always been
unassertively a kind of captain
of our determined course, she noted for
kindness. Now age is driving us ashore
toward death's rocks, and sister is again
the first among us, to be gravely stricken
and guide us nowhere.

But outside the door
of the infirmary the nurse tells us,
"She's a tough old bird and she'll pull through."
The corridor is crowded with her friends
astounded she is ill, who never was.
Nobody, she said, must let us know
so we wouldn't be bothered till she mends.

UPENDRANATH ASHK

2 HINDI POEMS

MY AGE'S WINTER

Alas, to view from this silent snowclad peak
(of my heart's mountain)
Innocent-eyed
The glowing panorama of blue skies,
The World.
Which shines
With the multiple colours
Painted by the inspired hands of
The sun of morn and eve,
Stars of dark nights and
Moon of the glorious half
Who collect their slipping moments
Cautiously, everyday anew,
And set them here and there.

But the heart shivers
To turn and peep into
Those deep dark dungeons

Whose peaks (now clad in milking snow)
Were black till yesterday
And lancelike sharp
Piercing through the breasts of skies

Where was the snow? The season was
Of rains when storms,
Full of restless clouds,
Raged and roared
And poured in torrents
Indulging in their full free play.

The body bore their passion, their curse, but
Now the snow is cast all round,
The black has melted
Heaviness gone
And light winds roam about,
Rainless.

Desires done off
Flare again
Quivering like the last ripple of life
Through the wounded body of the snake
Who, next moment,
Drops dead, ropelike.

The heart shivers
(that is true)
And yet, somewhere below this milky snow
Terrified, like a snail,
Closing its eyes, hiding the horns,
Longingly awaits for its chance
To rise again
That same black
Whose edge is blunted
By the winter of age.
Alas, to view from this silent snowclad peak!

*Translated by
Mahendra Kulasrestha*

PRAKASH JAIN

A NEW THOUGHT WILL BE BORN

A voice comes,
It pierces the vast
Expanses of Time
And then scatters.

New layers of Culture
Quiver like snakes
In the minds of Adam's sons,
New covers are prepared
And the old quilt is torn to shreds.

Struggles revive every time —
Revolutions raise their hissing heads daily —
Powers gather and surge in new camps,
And the lost day
Tries to find a place
In some unknown grave.

The footprints of today's progress
Will slowly dissolve in tomorrow's sands
And then again a new thought will be born.

*Translated by
Mahendra Kulasrestha*

DENISE LEVERTOV

REVIEW: ON INDIA

Writer's Workshop Miscellany #2 & #3
The Night Before Us — Deb Kumar Das
The Parrot's Death — P.Lal
And Then The Sun — Pradip Sen
The Unfinished Man — Nissim Ezekiel
The Oleanders — R. de L. Furtado
A Small World — Kewlian Sio
The Catullus of William Hull
The Lamp is Low — Robert Perlongo

All published by Writer's Workshop, 162/92 Lake Gardens.
Calcutta 31, India

Writer's Workshop in Calcutta, 'a small group devoted to the discussion and diffusion of Creative writing, publishes 'at least 6 times a year' a miscellany or little magazine, as well as occasional small paperbound volumes of poetry and prose. In the October 1960 issue of the magazine (#2) appears a symposium, to which 7 writers contributed (one of whom is an Englishman, David McCutcheon, a Lecturer at the University of Jadavpur) on the problems faced by Indian writers today. The first question asked is: *Can there be such a thing as Indian Poetry?* — a curious question to Western ears. Of course what is behind it is the fact that India is a land of many tongues, of which English must be counted as one of the most important. The discussion continues under these headings: *Is the English language capable of expressing Indian Language and tradition? Can real Indian poetry be written in English?* (another try at the same question) and *In what sense is poetry now being written in English in India, truly Indian?*

The kind of uncertainty bred in the intellectuals (especially) of an ancient civilized country after a long period of alien domination — the conflict of cultures, the mixture of pride and uneasiness — is revealed immediately in the very asking of these questions. Many of the answers are given, in contrast, with a show of assurance; these are all writers more or less committed to writing in English; but most of the poems in the magazine and the pamphlets bely that assurance. There is no tragedy, for the poet, greater than not having a language fully his own and which is also the language of his potential public. (One may say that the poet creates his language, as Dante 'created' Italian for instance; but that must be a *great* poet, a poet of tremendous energy and scope, a rare hero; and the time before such a saviour arises is a hard one for lesser men.) After the ground is broken the lesser masters can spring up.) No doubt most of these young poets of India each know one or more of the 240 languages of the country; but they have chosen to write in English in common agreement that it is the best vehicle for their sensibilities, and because, as Deb Kumar Das puts it, 'A literate all-India audience exists in the English language, whatever its limitations; no all-India audience exists in any other language.' And P.Lal: '... only in English can real Indian poetry be written . . . I cannot imagine a Punjabi writing Bengali poetry, or a Maharrashtrian writing Hindi poetry, but there are Tamilians, Bengalis, Punjabis, Gujeratis, Jews, Goans, Sikkimese — all Indians — writing in English on Indian themes for Indian readers.' And Nirad Chiraudi: 'If the decision is in favor of a mother-tongue, says Bengali, and it has been taken by a writer who is more or less equally at home in English, it will not be long before he will regret it. At one stroke he will cut himself off not only from the world at large but also from the rest of India, which, if he . . . cherishes the ideal of a pan-Indian culture, cannot but land him in frustration . . . he will lose about half of his expressive power in trying to write in an Indian language . . . he will have to lower his intellectual standards. He will become provincial not only linguistically, but also intellectually, and to be provincial also means mediocrity.'

Probably for some of these poets, perhaps for all, English is the language most their own, the language in which they think;

yet the feeling I frequently get from their work is that they are not truly at home in it. They may have spoken it from infancy; yet in some basic sense it remains an acquired language: they are not really *inside it*. And therefore they have not escaped that very provinciality they thought to avoid.

It is a desperate problem. I cannot help wondering if in spite of the arguments quoted above they are not on the wrong track. English stands to them in the relation Latin once did to Europe. But European literature did not develop in all its richness until Latin was pushed aside and the individual languages of the continent grew and blossomed as they were put to creative use. Should not Indian poets be looking to their native languages for future strength — building an audience in them, not expecting a readymade one? Developing their expressive resources? (Not all 240 tongues! But at least the major ones.) Is the spirit of pan-Indianism a healthy one for its poets?

Kevin O'Sullivan, a young writer from Cambridge University, corresponding with the Workshop, quotes Eliot: "... the poet's task is 'To purify the language of the tribe.'" "I would have thought," he continues, "that Bengalis would have had to write in Bengali if they were to achieve anything great . . . and that the ability to use the common word . . . is essential . . . I have many Indian friends . . . and I gather that English is the language of the educated westernized minority in India, and that it is being replaced as quickly as possible by Hindi . . ." (However, Deb Kumar Das, I must point out, speaks of Hindi as 'a lexicographer's fantasy', which certainly doesn't sound promising.) And Mr. Chaudhuri follows his remarks on the frustrations of writing in an Indian language with the words: "On the other hand . . . every Indian writer [who chooses English] has to decide inexorably who he is *not* writing for, because in proportion as he becomes more acceptable to an English journal or publisher he becomes difficult for his countrymen. The fact that thousands of Indians know English as well as any educated Englishman does not make any difference to this crucial dilemma. For an Indian writing in English the general body of Indian readers literate in English and a linguistically and intellectually competent body of readers are mutually exclusive entities." And again: "One extraordinary thing which every Indian writer in English

Denise Levertov

becomes aware of as he pursues his vocation more and more seriously is that he becomes more and more inaccessible to his countrymen as he becomes more and more acceptable to the West, the English-speaking world." These statements by Mr. Chaudhuri are somewhat ambiguous; but I think it is evident that he is pointing to a difficulty arising not from the mechanics of education in languages but from deep cultural, psychological conflicts.

Some of the workshop writers are much concerned with being 'truly Indian', others decry this concern and believe in a supra-national poetry, a kind of international currency of image and idea (a fallacy in my opinion — the best translation is something else, yes, it is possible, but one cannot write in the first instance with an eye to the 'universal' image without producing wholly generalities; of which the English poems of Tagore are a sad example, incidentally) — but almost all are unconsciously trying to be more English than the English. One feels like crying, O.K., O.K., we know you are well versed in Eng. Lit., we know you can allude at will to Eliot, Yeats, Matthew Arnold, Shakespeare, and all, stop trying to prove it, you don't need to, for God's sake! This failing is particularly evident in the book reviews which too often resemble the brief notices at the back of the London Times Literary Supplement — a deplorable model.

Well, let us put aside doubt and controversy and look directly at some of the poems:

Outstanding both among the poems in the 2 issues of the magazine and among the poems by Indian writers published in book form is a short poem by Narmadeshwar Prasad (head of the sociology department at the University of Patna) which I quote in its entirety:

38, and dying
without rhythm or power

only 12 days ago
at Khajuraho
I thought I saw
eternity

aglow
in and around
the Satbhanjiks, the apsaras
nine hundred years ago

at Khajuraho
even now

becoming . . .

I am 38, and dying,

without rhythm, without power . . .

Of the books, that by Deb Kumar Das is the most interesting
(with the exception of Hull's Catullus). Feeling and technique are
contemporary, alive. He is only 25 - 24 when "The Night Before
Us" was published, 20 when it was written.

. . . And when you lit your last cigarette it woke

Double flare in blurred window

Outside the light.

I would turn before

Cars move up. Moth's slow purring

Out of cobweb hidden corners.

Walking shadow. Red Green Amber

And crazy neon smiles overhead.

I would turn

Your drowsy head . . .

(From 'Memory Behind a Windshield')

And listen to this, to the way the pace varies, with what precision
the lines are broken:

Kleptomaniac

Watch the quick man with nervous fingers

Between tall mirrors in a department store.

His fingers like lizards scuttle

Quick in and out of his coat

To heartbeat the slow tread of heels

On a glass floor.

It was a second no only a moment

And it was all over with a sudden

Dart and gasp as he was caught in

the doorway and hustled in beating

The air. With puny fists.

Puny fists, sob and whine in the lost land

Between the two tall mirrors that smiled.

His poems are immature, as befitted his age when he wrote them;
but if any of these men is going to make it, he's the one.

Denise Levertov

In "The Parrot's Death," P. Lal shows some elegance but no outstanding originality. He is the chief editor of the Workshop series. The best poem is 'The Old Man', which ends:

... when I laughed, I was not glad;
light in his eyes, he bowed his head;
he was an old white man, but his eyes were red.

Pradip Sen's poems are a little less elegant and no more original. A review of this book reprinted in one of the Miscellanies from 'Hindustan Standard' praises it in terms applicable to a major poet, which is unfortunate. A poem by Pradip Sen in Writer's Workshop #3 is more incisive than any poem in his book:

The man on my back
Hates my guts
Gives me no rest
Spurns all I love best.

The man on my back
He's a killer —
Kills the boy in me
The man that would be;

(From 'The Man On My Back')

R.de L. Furtado (lest the name surprise you, remember that the Portugese were in India too) also has been over-rated in India. A climate of easy appreciation adds to the dangers that beset this group, it seems. He is in fact so unsure that he can write lines like, 'This is a thirst that from the soul doth rise', etc. His best poem is "The Moment". But I am bound to say that if he were an American poet I would not give him serious attention. He has a very long way to go. And I cannot say more for Nissim Ezekiel — his poems are slightly more competent but on the other hand they are duller.

Kewlian Sio's book is all prose — stories and vignettes. I enjoyed some of these. They are modest, clear, and felt. The shortest and simplest are the best.

Finally, there are two books by Americans — William Hull, who has taught in India, and Robert Perlongo who has never been there. Mr. Hull's versions of Catullus are almost consistently crisp in language and strong in feeling. Better still, the formal

construction of his poems is often subtle and of itself interesting. When will people realize that this is not a minor but a vital factor in poetry? Ideas with which the reader can identify or which stir up his mind, images that enrich his perceptions — these are lost if the form of the poem is not a living, distinct, presence.

. . . My love was a flower
from a sparrow-dropped seed in a field,
and a plough going over.
My love is quite dead.
Let it dry a little longer
and let a small wind blow:
and moats of loss
no ordinary sun can tell
from ordinary soil:
all dust.

(From # XI, the last in the book)

Study the variations of beats within the lines; the interplay of the o's, the l's. I wish other writers reviewed here would learn from him.

Robert Perlongo ('The Lamp Is Low') I might describe as promising. That is, I do not much care for the poems in this book, but I heard him read at Bard College this spring and his more recent poems showed that he is developing. He has not found his own voice but I think he may. He needs to grow bolder and more precise.

Of the prose in *Writer's Workshop 2 & 3*, Mr. S. K. Ghosh's lament on the decline of the essay is absurdly free from any grasp of what is happening in contemporary literature and why. It reads like a paper to be read at a provincial ladies' literary club in 1913. He quaintly gives the private addresses of various English literati whom he consulted.

Anita Dasai, a member of the Symposium, contributes a story. It is not remarkable, but she sounds like an intelligent young woman (23) from whom more may be expected.

There are two stories by Deb Kumar Das of which I found 'Blue Lightning', written in the first person in a kind of Calcutta-Cockney vernacular, the more interesting — but not up to the promise of his poems.

HARAK LAL G MATHUR

" PEACE "

We like, peace, peace and peace,
There is no, any use of atom bombs,
So we must, to destroy the weapons,
We like, calm, calm and calm.

We saw in second world war,
The atom weapon, attacked on Japan,
On that day, we saw the ghost,
And human was fearing very most.

Now peace, peace and only peace
Spreading in world, the human-voice,
We must use the atomic-energy,
In development of world, towards peace.

Harak Lal G. Mathur.

[In Hindi Language :-
[~~Harak Lal G. Mathur.~~]]

CONTRIBUTORS NOTES

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UPENDRANATH ASHK-is a well known Hindi poet and novelist. He lives in Neelabh Prakashau, Allahabad, India. The poem contained herein was written on his 50th birthday.

MAX BENSE-was born in Cologne, Germany. He teaches at "Technische Hochschule", Stuttgart. He is an authority on semantics, cybernetics and the theory of communication. Professor Bense is the editor of *Augenblick*, a review dedicated to experimental literature.

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